

**§ 1740.8 Scoring criteria for the grant competition.**

(a) After an application is found to be eligible, it will be scored in three categories: the rurality of the applicant's core coverage area, the average National School Lunch Program eligibility ratio in the applicant's core coverage area, and the critical need for the project.

(b)(1)(i) Scoring in this program is based on a simplified representation of the project's digital coverage area. To find a transmitter's simplified coverage area, go to the FCC TV Query Web site (<http://www.fcc.gov/fcc-bin/audio/tvq.html>) and access the station Service Contour Map. This map shows coverage at the appropriate field strength in dBμ, overlaid on a Census Tiger Map. The map also shows counties covered. The core coverage area is the set of counties that are either entirely within the appropriate coverage contour, or are at least seventy-five percent (75%) within the contour. For contours where counties are very large with respect to coverage, as might be the case for some western states and for most translators, there may be only one county within the coverage contour. In such cases, this county is the station's core coverage area. Every transmitter and translator must have a core coverage area consisting of one or more counties.

(ii) In the case of translators, where a coverage contour area does not exist, the applicant shall define a coverage contour area and explain how coverage was estimated. This estimated coverage contour area is subject to acceptance by RUS.

(2) When an application covers more than one transmitter or translator, the core coverage area of the application is the sum of the core coverage areas of all transmitters and translators included in the application.

(c) Rurality is a measure of the degree to which a project benefits rural areas. Up to fifty (50) points are available in this category. Urban areas bisected by the computed contour line are disregarded, since they represent fringe viewers. The Rurality score is computed as follows:

(1) The rural population of a core coverage area must be calculated. The

rural population of a county is calculated by subtracting the county's urban population(s) from the total county population. If the core coverage area consists of multiple counties, the rural population is the sum of all included counties' rural populations. Urban area and county populations may be found at the American Factfinder Web site [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?\\_lang=en](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en).

(2) The Rurality score is computed by multiplying the rural population for the core coverage area by one hundred (100), and subtracting fifty (50) from it. If this calculation results in a negative number, the Rurality score is zero. The formula is:

$$100 \times [(total\ population - urban\ population) / total\ population] - 50$$

(3) If an applicant has no urban communities within the core coverage area, the computation would deliver a score of 50.

(d) Economic Need will be measured by the ability of the public in an area to support Public Television financially. Up to 25 points are available in this category.

(1) The score for Economic Need is computed from the average of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) eligibility percentages for all school districts within the core coverage area. NSLP eligibility percentage information may be obtained from the state or local agency that administers the program, and the application must include a certification from this organization that the percentages provided are correct. Please note that the score for Economic Need is computed from the eligibility percentage, not the participation percentage. The score is computed by multiplying the average eligibility percentage by 100 (to convert percentage to a whole number), subtracting 25, dividing the quotient by two, and limiting the result to 25 points. A negative result yields a score of zero.

$$[(average\ NSLP\ eligibility\ percentage \times 100) - 25] \div 2, \text{ not to exceed 25 points}$$

(2) [Reserved]

## Rural Utilities Service, USDA

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(e) Critical Need will be measured by the urgency and importance of the project to the rural community the applicant serves. Up to 25 points are available in this category. Critical Need evaluates factors not captured in the Rurality and Economic Need scoring categories, such as:

(1) Geographic or coverage characteristics of the public television station's digital television coverage area that make the digital transition unusually expensive;

(2) A severe lack of specialized human resources (such as teachers) for which digital educational television will compensate;

(3) Geographic isolation of communities which will be overcome with public television station services;

(4) Non-traditional community needs (such as adult vocational retraining) that may be met only with digital public television station broadcast capabilities;

(5) Historical events that have placed the public television station in severe financial stress; and

(6) The degree to which the project purposes will specifically benefit the rural public.

### § 1740.9 Grant application.

The grant application must include the following:

(a) An application for federal assistance, Standard Form 424.

(b) An executive summary, not to exceed two pages, describing the public television station, its service area and offerings, its current digital transition status, and the proposed project.

(c) Evidence of the applicant's eligibility to apply under this Notice, proving that the applicant is a Public Television Station as defined in this Part, and that it is required by the FCC to perform the digital transition.

(d) A spreadsheet showing the total project cost, with a breakdown of items sufficient to enable RUS to determine individual item eligibility.

(e) A coverage contour map showing the digital television coverage area of the applicant. This map must show the counties (or county) comprising the core coverage area by shading and by name. Partial counties included in the applicant's core coverage area must be

identified as partial and must contain an attachment with the applicant's estimate of the percentage that its coverage contour comprises the total area of the county (total area is available from American Factfinder, referenced in § 1740.8 (c)(1)). If the application is for a translator, the coverage area may be estimated by the applicant through computer modeling or some other reasonable method, and this estimate is subject to acceptance by RUS.

(f) The applicant's own calculation of its Rurality score, supported by a worksheet showing the population of its core coverage area, and the urban and rural populations within the core coverage area. The data source for the urban and rural components of that population must be identified. If the application includes computations made by a consultant or other organization outside the public television station, the application shall state the details of that collaboration.

(g) The applicant's own calculation of its Economic Need score, supported by a worksheet showing the National School Lunch Program eligibility levels for all school districts within the core coverage area and averaging these eligibility percentages. The application must include a statement from the state or local organization that administers the NSLP program certifying the school district scores used in the computations.

(h) If applicable, a presentation not to exceed five pages demonstrating the Critical Need for the project.

(i) Evidence that the FCC has authorized the initiation of digital broadcasting at the project sites. In the event that an FCC construction permit has not been issued for one or more sites, the RUS may include those sites in the grant, and make advance of funds for that site conditional upon the submission of a construction permit.

(j) Compliance with other Federal statutes. The applicant must provide evidence or certification that it is in compliance with all applicable Federal statutes and regulations, including, but not limited to the following:

(1) Executive Order (E.O.) 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity, as